GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1825
ANSWERED ON:29.11.2007
QUALITY OF PRODUCTS
Chitthan Shri N.S.V.

Will the Minister of FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that food processing industries are suffering in different overseas market including European Union due to their low standard products;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the measures being taken to improve the quality of products of these industries and make them competitive in international market?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES (SHRI SUBODH KANT SAHAI)

(a): There is no information that food processing industries are suffering in different overseas market including European Union due to their low standard products except marine products where occasionally there are some rejections in EU mainly due to residues of antibiotics.

(b): Indian seafood products occasionally face problems in overseas markets like European Union, on account of detection of residues of antibiotics from aquacultured shrimp. During 2007, 18 Rapid Alert Notifications were issued against export of shrimp consignment from India by the European Union.

(c): For improving the quality of these food products and make them competitive in the international market, Ministry of Food Processing Industries is providing financial assistance in the form of grant under the scheme of Technology Upgradation/ Modernisation/ Establishment of food processing industries for setting up of new unit or for expansion of existing food processing unit. Under this Scheme, MFPI extends financial assistance to food processing units in the form of grant-in-aid @ 25% of the cost of Plant and Machinery and Technical Civil Works subject to maximum of Rs. 50.00 lakhs in general areas or 33.33% subject to maximum of Rs. 75.00 lakhs in difficult areas. In order to ensure speedy disbursement of the financial assistance, the Ministry has decided to decentralize the disbursement procedure through banks under the Scheme of setting up / modernization / expansion of food processing industries w.e.f. 01.04.07. Now the applicants will be able to avail of grant / assistance through the neighbourhood banks who have already appraised the project and provided loans to them.

The Government of India has also notified limits for certain contaminants and prohibited the use of certain banned items in fish and fishery products processed in the country, at par with EU and US regulations. The Government of India has issued a notification dated 10.07.2002 prescribing MRLs for pesticides, heavy metals, etc and banning 20 substances (antibiotics and other pharmacologically active substances) in hatcheries, farms, feed units, pre-processing and processing centres to have a legal base to monitor and regulate use of chemicals in Aquaculture.

Government have adequate facilities as well, to test for residual antibiotic or other environmental contaminants to the lowest sensitivity level as these residues are being tested / monitored in the developed countries. The Government has also decided to set up/upgrade 9 laboratories at a total cost of Rs. 13.5 crore for testing for the presence of antibiotic residues to the sensitivity levels (ppb) prescribed by European Union.

A National Residue Control Programme through monitoring of antibiotics & pesticide residues and chemical elements in Aquaculture production is in place. As insisted by EU the monitoring of residue levels of pesticides and antibiotics in shrimp/fish for assuring quality of farmed shrimps/ prawns / fish was taken up and required numbers of samples are being analysed for pesticides and for antibiotics.

The Government is organizing training programmers on implementation of Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Programme (HACCP) to meet the challenging international requirements. The Government has been arranging sector wise various training programmes for technologists, processors, pre-processors, fish handlers, fishermen, boat crew and other persons handling fishery products at various states in the country, to educate them on the hygienic handling of fish at different stages.

The aqua farmers of the country are made aware of the ill effects of antibiotics through regular campaigns in the farming villages.